

CITIZENS  
guide  
to the THIRD  
WORLD



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CITIZENS  
guide

THIRD

## CITIZENS' GUIDE TO THE THIRD WORLD

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*Post Politica*  
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FOR MY UNBORN CHILD,

*May you be a good citizen.*

# INTRODUCTION

AS I START WRITING this guide, take a look out my window with me. There goes the starving beggar child; and look even the kids passing him by on their way to school seem malnourished. What will they learn on an empty stomach? Well, even if their teacher decides to turn up today, not much. That smell that cringes your nose, what is that you ask? It's from the open sewer overflowing with human waste and garbage. You can't hear yourself think, you say? Well of course, every single vehicle, from busses to trishaws to tractors, are blaring their horns. Whew, close call, but don't worry: pedestrians are used to almost getting run over, the lucky ones anyway. And yes, amidst all this, that's a convoy of brand-new Benzes, and those are police officers shooing people away. To think we voted him in because he promised to be better than the last guy! But the dirty looks are not entirely out of disappointment, they owe just as much to envy. For as much as we suffer due to corruption, the moment we get even a sniff of a chance we would do exactly the same.

Welcome to the Third World. A place where most people on planet Earth live. A place where chaos and misery are the norm.

One of my previous books—*Colombo: A Critical Introspection*—asked the question: What are the causes of this typical Third World chaos and misery? In the broadest and briefest sense, the answer was culture. Here in *Citizens' Guide to the Third World* my aim is to provide a self-help book for culture—a practical guide to assist the billions of the Third World in their great crawl out of the abyss. As such this guide offers no specific 'Whys' to justify each and every rule and guideline contained within it, but only the promise that if these rules and guidelines are faithfully and widely followed, a vital contribution will be made to the great crawl of the Third World toward development.

To maximise the contribution of this book toward this mission of utmost importance, keep the following in mind:

**THIS BOOK IS FREE.** Where possible this book will be free to any and all. This book will only have to be purchased in two circumstances: If you or your organisation wishes to have a print copy or where a particular eBook vendor does not allow free distribution.

**THIS BOOK IS INTENDED TO BE PART OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM.** In the Third World we have extremely meagre resources available for education. An overwhelming share of these resources should be allocated to primary as opposed to tertiary education since it has been proven that primary education has the greatest rate of social return in the context of the Third World. If a few have theoretical physics degrees while most do not know how to cross the road, both groups will suffer. Syllabuses can and should be designed that take these rules and guidelines and instil them as habits in young citizens. Assistance in this regard can be received by contacting me (see below).

**THIS BOOK SHOULD BE TRANSLATED.** Translation into your local language is strongly encouraged. To start this process, contact me (contact information is available at the end of this book).

**THIS BOOK IS A WORK-IN-PROGRESS.** Upcoming editions will feature new rules and guidelines that have somehow been left out and ones that due to changing circumstances require inclusion. Moreover, I welcome any rules and guidelines that you as conscientious citizens, parents, educators and policy makers can suggest to improve *Citizens' Guide to the Third World*. On receiving your suggestions, I will carefully assess them, and you might well find them featured in subsequent editions.

Now let us embark on our long journey. It is not going to be easy. Along the way you will find that you have to make many sacrifices and that you will often have to take the longer route instead of the shortcut that you are used to taking; you very well might ask yourself—can I afford this? Is it worthwhile?

The answer is yes. Stay the course. No matter what those around you are doing—stay the course. If it is difficult to stay the course while those around you are obviously not—stopping looking around, put your head down and become an inner-directed person. Keep telling yourself this: *'No matter what those around me do, I am determined to become a modern and progressive person. I am determined to become a good citizen.'* For if, no matter what, you stay the course and manage to convert these rules and guidelines into values and habits, you will see, almost by magic, your life and that of your community and country transform. Soon, around you, the chaos will become harmony, corruption will become integrity, injustice will become fairness, war will become peace, and poverty will become prosperity.

**“**No matter what those around me do, I am determined to become a modern and progressive person. I am determined to become a good citizen.

## GENERAL RULES

THESE GENERAL RULES, like all the rules in this book, are aimed toward achieving one overriding goal—to optimise social systems. Since these social systems are many and varied, ranging from roads to governance, schools to workplaces, no matter how extensive subsequent editions of this book become, there is no possible way that it can cover every single situation of importance. This is where these general rules become necessary: To fill in the gaps.

As you work your way through this book, notice how nearly all the specific rules stem from these general rules. Keep this in mind when you are 'filling in a gap', ask yourself: Does the specific way I am about to behave follow from one or more of the general rules? If the answer is 'YES', you may go ahead, confident that you are doing the right thing.

**FOLLOW THE RULES!** The first and most important rule is simply to follow the rules. The set of rules which govern a system has been designed so that when followed, the best possible outcomes for all those within a system are achieved with the least negative consequences—so FOLLOW THE RULES. Most often the problem in the Third World is not the absence of rules but both the lack of awareness of the rules and the lack of willingness to follow them. So your first step is to learn the rules, and then follow them precisely. Keep in mind that rules do not necessarily have to be formal (written down and/or legally imposed). Less formal or informal rules can be established between citizens most often by verbal agreement; such as for instance between friends. Both formal and informal rules have to be faithfully followed.

## **COMPETE BY SELF-IMPROVEMENT NOT BY UNDERCUTTING**

**FELLOW CITIZENS.** Wanting to outdo others is perfectly natural (although, as you will see, cooperation is equally as important in a well-functioning society). However, it is crucial that you do so only by one means—improving your own performance. Undercutting is more than just anything done by you to reduce the current performance or current share of rewards of your competitors. It also includes anything done by you that takes away from a level playing field. In other words, you have only truly won, when both you and your competitor started from the same starting line and had the same opportunities to succeed—and you still outperformed him or her. Focus on only your own performance and nothing else. In the bigger scheme of things, you do not gain a thing by undercutting your fellow citizens, instead everybody loses. Whereas, by single-mindedly improving your own performance, you yourself gain the most whilst at the same time uplifting society.

**WHOLEHEARTEDLY COOPERATE.** Understand which situations call for competition and which call for cooperation. The simple rule to separate the two is this: When competition is called for it is usually openly and clearly stated so. For instance, a certain organisation announces that they are launching a design competition open to the public where the best submission will become their new company logo, and you and your friend decide to take part. Here, without of course undercutting your friend, you must try to fairly outdo him or her. The more complex rule is this: Only compete where if you and your rival, and fellow citizens generally, engage in this kind of competition, society as a whole will benefit. In all other situations, where these two rules do not apply—wholeheartedly cooperate. So, for instance, if a tiny little window of daylight opens up between your vehicle and the next and a fellow citizen is trying to turn their vehicle into this queue, do not race to beat him or her to the spot. Under neither rule is the traffic system a competition. If you carefully apply the complex rule, you will see that if no one ever gives way and everyone races to a spot, the occurrence and frequency of accidents will greatly increase. Therefore, in

this instance, give way to your fellow citizen, and in general—wholeheartedly cooperate.

**TREAT EVERYONE AS HUMANS FIRST.** In the Third World we often put two social attributes of our fellow man before their essential humanity. Firstly, we make the **insider-outsider distinction**. Family members, of course, and friends are insiders, and everybody else is an outsider. Secondly, we make the **high-low distinction**. Those from wealthy families and dominant social groups along with those holding powerful office are the high, and the rest who make up the great majority are the low. Based on these two distinctions we discriminate against outsiders and the low. We must start off by recognising all fellow citizens including outsiders and the low as human beings. As human beings we all have certain rights, including, amongst others, to be treated respectfully and the right to have a fair opportunity to succeed. Under no circumstances should we deny any fellow human being regardless of any social distinction these rights. Indeed, after we honour these human rights for all, and one person fairly outperforms the other or others, then, and only then, must we positively discriminate in his or her favour.

**DO NOT TAKE SHORTCUTS.** That irresistible little shortcut that seems so convenient to you, when practised collectively leads to massive losses for your community and country. But aren't shortcuts just a more efficient way of reaching an outcome, you ask? Well, by the strict definition of the word, yes; however those Third World habits of yours that you think are shortcuts do not in fact lead to optimal outcomes from social systems. Of course, if the same outcome or better can be achieved by spending less resources and effort we must go for it; but remember this is better described as 'efficiency' and 'innovation' rather than shortcuts. The important difference is that in the case of innovation and efficiency the same or better outcome is sure to be achieved. So completely cleanse your mind of the concept of shortcuts.

**DO ONE THING AT A TIME AND DO IT WELL.** Talking on the phone with one person and separately with three others around you?

Working while watching a game? Trying to learn something while dealing with a family issue? Yes, there is such a thing called multitasking, but for now it is best if you focus on doing one thing at a time and doing it to the very best of your abilities. Firstly, arrange the tasks that you have to complete in order of their priority. Then work through each task until it is completed before going on to the next.

**PLAN AND PREPARE PRECISELY.** Do not, so to speak, simply 'wake up in the morning' or turn up 'out of the blue' and start working on something—plan and prepare, and do both with the greatest precision. Before starting anything get into the habit of asking yourself questions along these lines: What is my goal here? What is the best way to achieve my goal? What are the resources I will need? What can possibly go wrong and how can I deal with such possibilities if they occur? Importantly, begin your planning and preparation well before you start your task—you never have as much time as you think you do; and remember, things will not magically go right all on their own.

**THINK.** Question your current behaviour, habits, values and beliefs. Ask yourself this question: Are my behaviours, habits, values and beliefs, if widely practised and held, the ones that will get the very best out of the social systems I find myself in today? Or is it that I practise and hold them merely because everyone else does? And, does everyone else practise and hold them merely because they have been handed down from a very different past?

An important truth to place at the forefront of your thinking as you embark on your journey toward good citizenship is the extent of your reach. If you jump a queue, the person whom you unfairly jumped in front of will likely do the same the next time he or she has to stand in line, and then so will the next wronged person and the next and so on. Thankfully, 'pay it forward' works for both socially negative as well as socially positive behaviour. So remember that every time you practise socially positive behaviour based on both the specific and general rules contained in this book, you are setting-off a ripple that will soon grow into a wave toward development.



## BEHAVE

### “NO CORRUPTION”

Do not engage in any corruption on any scale whatsoever. Cleanse your behaviour of all corrupt practices. Take the lead or assist in stamping out corruption whenever and wherever you see it in your community or neighbourhood.

Corruption is any act or failure to act on your part for personal gain that prevents or limits the goals of the system you are functioning in from being achieved.

To prevent corruption, single-mindedly use the resources, power and opportunities you are entrusted with by the system for no reason other than achieving the goals of the system and in no way other than the specific way set out by the system.

For example, if you are a school teacher, and you announce in class that students who require extra help can attend your paid private tuition classes—this is corruption on your part. Why, you might ask? After all, you are offering a service that society generally considers to be acceptable, and one which society generally considers it acceptable to charge for. Well, this is corruption because the school system requires that you achieve only its goal of educating your students using only the specific ways it has set out. That is by using the time allotted in the school day and without requesting any additional resources from your students. This is for several good reasons. Amongst which are the following: The school can monitor what is being taught, the safety of the students can be ensured, students whose families cannot afford to pay your tuition fees are not disadvantaged, students do not feel pressurised into unnecessarily attending your classes and, perhaps most importantly, you do

not have an incentive to disadvantage students who do not attend your paid classes and you do not have an incentive to teach better in your paid classes than during the school day. All good reasons, and all of which, if they are not prevented, will soon defeat the goal of the school system which is to give the best possible education to all its students. Now you can see why you must use the resources, power and opportunities you are entrusted with by the system for no reason other than achieving the goals of the system and in no way other than the specific way set out by the system. Since even though when we start adding goals to those of the system and we start nudging away from its methods, it seems that the system's goals will still be achieved—very soon we find that these goals are defeated.

The following are all types of corruption, **DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY OF THEM:**

- **PAYING OR ACCEPTING BRIBES.** Bribes are most often paid and received in the form of money but need not only be so. Anything of value to the party it is offered to can be a bribe, including the following:
  - Gifts.
  - Favours.
  - Opportunities to avoid due punishment.
- **NEPOTISM.** When entrusted with resources, power or the opportunity to do so, do not favour family and friends over those more deserving.
- **CRONYISM.** When entrusted with power or the opportunity to do so, do not appoint to positions of authority those who are undeserving solely because such appointees will be in debt to you and will have to act according to your orders and best-interests.
- **GRAFT.** Do not steal money and other resources meant to be used to achieve the system's goals for your own personal gain.

- **DO NOT APPEAR TO BE CORRUPT.** It is important not only that you completely cleanse your behaviour of corruption but also that your behaviour does not appear to be corrupt. For example, let us say that you are a manager looking to hire an employee to fill a vacant position in your organisation. You honestly believe that your daughter is the best person for the job: she is the most qualified and experienced. You still cannot hire her. This particular situation is one example of a **conflict-of-interest**. Since the best-interest of the system (to hire the best person for the job) naturally tends to pull in the opposite direction from your own best-interest (to hire your daughter). Whether you have the honest intention to act according to the best-interest of the system (not act in a nepotistic way) is not a factor that you should take into consideration—you cannot hire your daughter. What you must always do is disclose a conflict-of-interest: in this case, that the candidate in question is your daughter. Then, if those with suitable authority in your organisation agree, allow them to appoint an individual or a panel other than yourself to assess the suitability of your daughter to fill the position. In no way must you influence the decision of this impartial individual or panel.

## “RESPECT WOMEN”

- **DO NOT HARASS.** Do not under any circumstances behave in a way that makes a fellow female citizen feel embarrassed, scared or uncomfortable. This is called **harassment**. In nearly all countries harassment is a serious crime—and where it is not, it should be. Harassment includes (but is not limited to) the following:
  - Making any kind of uninvited communication with a fellow female citizen beyond a polite greeting. This includes uninvited telephone calls, romantic offers and comments about their appearance.

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